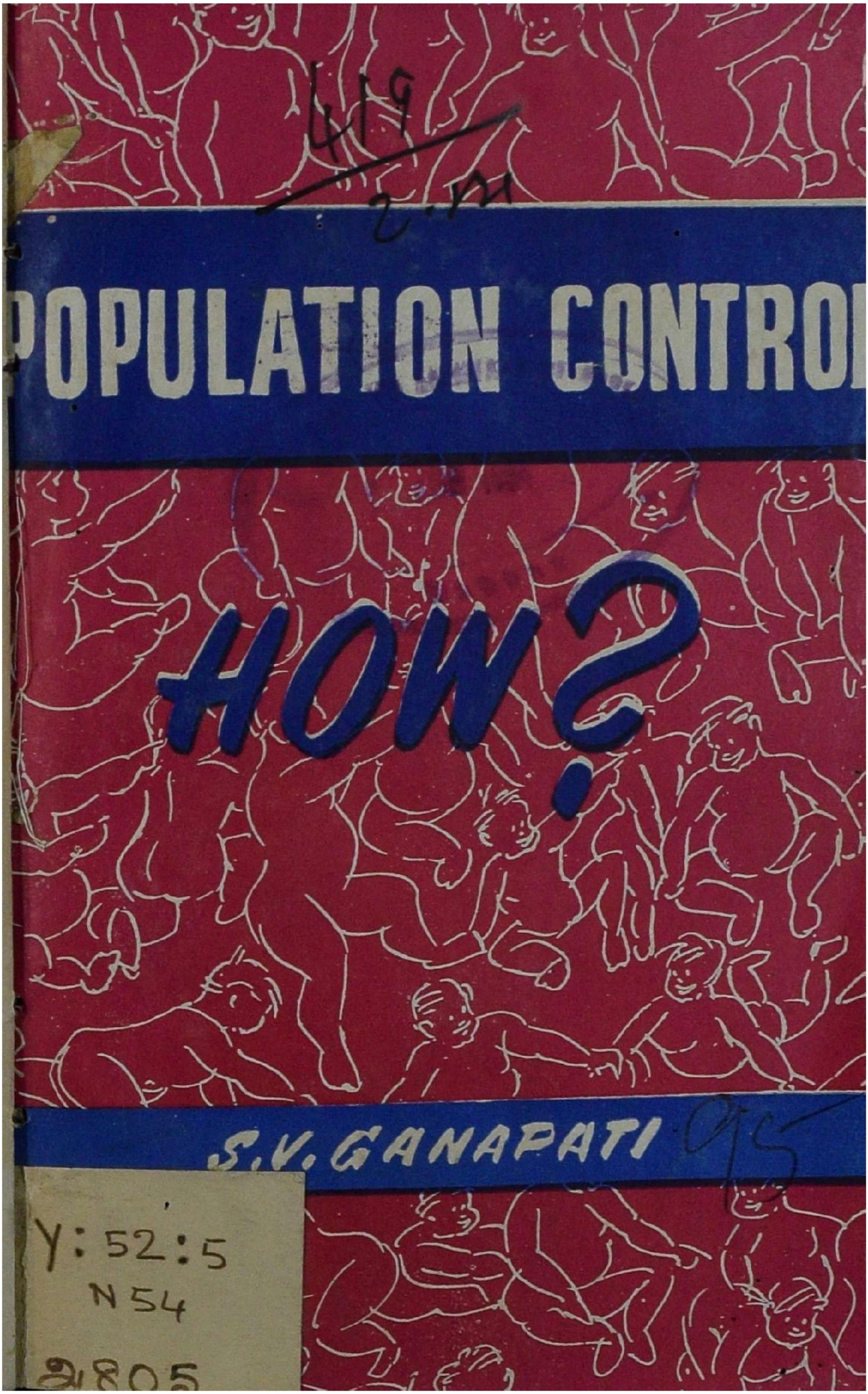

POPULATION CONTROL

HOW?

S. V. GANAPATI

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Population Control

HOW?

by

S. V. GANAPATI, A.M.I.E.E.

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Preface

Ideas about the phenomena of birth and death and about life process are generally so vague, even among scientists, that there has arisen of late such loose talk as controlling the birth rate at one's choice, as if it is like controlling the machinery we make. From the manner, by which the breeding of plants and animals are fostered and improved, people have come to the immediate and naive conclusion that a similar thing is possible of achievement even among the human population, forgetting, the fact that there is a distinguishing element in man known as "Individuality," which puts the case on a different footing altogether. Man's destiny, although intertwined with Nature or Cosmic activity, is also partly independent of it, whereas the destiny of the other creatures of the earth are wholly subordinate to it.

Because of this, man's birth and death are determined by his own self but this statement does not justify the immediate inference that he can control them as he likes. Man is not the body that he uses as a tool for the translation of his perennial ideas into physical activity in order to quench such ideas and attain the natural state of balance. By man is to be understood the total mental make-up which acts as the driving force and is called "Life." It is this that he can be master of although generally he is not and in the fashioning of which Nature has no hand. On

the other hand the body, required for the manifestation of the activity, has to be provided by Nature through other beings. This complicated organisation of specialised cell organisms is Nature's handiwork and had been created before the human soul emerged into being and cannot therefore be considered to have received any contribution from human effort. This body of ours emerged as a result of the efforts of the previous line of creatures. Human intervention is now made use of by Nature only to bring about the bodily frame, in the same manner as it makes use of other species for a like purpose.

Thus there are two forces at work in contributing to the human population namely (1) the activity of the human soul, which is an imaginative being endowed with vitality seeking a bodily framework to work out its hopes and ambitions and which changes this tool from time to time by its own desires and acts and (2) the handiwork of Nature which, in its unceasing activity, in response to the needs of the souls, goes on producing fresh organisations of cells through the human beings themselves. This combination of Soul and body is what we are, the individual spirit riding on the wave of the Cosmic spirit.

Population is an interplay of these two sets of activity and neither of them can individually account for increase in population. It is therefore fundamentally wrong to consider that we can solve the population problem on the lines in which it is practised and preached at present.

An attempt has been made in this pamphlet to examine the problem in all its aspects, obtaining a true understanding of the phenomena of birth and death. Without a proper conception of these Phenomena it will be futile to discuss the problem of population with any promise of fruitful conclusions. And so the significance of birth and death has been reasoned out in detail. The conclusions, that such a proper understanding of the phenomena lead to, are surprisingly different from accepted ideas.

It will be found that the solution to the problem lies in discarding ideas which run counter to the activity of Nature and adopting means which are in tune with it.

In the following pages the expressions "Nature" and "Cosmic activity" have been frequently used. They are to be understood as synonymous expressions.

The idea which is stressed in these pages, that death and rebirth are simultaneous phenomena, is not a new one but is as old as the Hindu Scriptures. It is stated in one of the major Upanishads that the soul behaves like the creature which, before leaving one leaf or branch, takes hold of a new one. The same idea is repeated in the Mahabharata and it finds emphatic acceptance in the Nadi Grantha of Kaka Bhujander. And lastly this very idea is exemplified in numerous stories in the Kathasarith Sagara of Somadevabhatta.

The writer would welcome criticisms and suggestions so that ideas presented here, which are not clear or convincing, may be elaborated and the pamphlet itself enlarged to meet all such criticisms.

S. V. GANAPATI

The Problem of Population

One of the most serious problems engaging the attention of the scientists and the nations of the world is the growth of human population which is considered to be increasing at such an alarming rate, that its feeding may become impossible sooner or later. A curious feature about this increase is that it is far more pronounced among the impoverished and hungry nations than in the industrially and economically advanced countries. This fact is identical with the feature that in every nation or race the largest increase in population its to be noticed only among the poor and low wage earning groups and not among socially advanced sections. When poverty and hunger stalks the land, communism is the inevitable outcome and so the minds of the advanced sections of the world are exercised furiously to check this evil tendency. They are far more concerned with the problem than the nations actually beset with it.

The remedies that obviouly suggested themselves, and which are being advocated with great persistence, are to improve the economic conditions in these countries with a surfeit of population and to introduce birth control. But how far these remedies can be successfully implemented and when implemented what measure of success can be obtained has not been studied. It has been tacitly assumed that economic conditions and conjugal relationship have a direct bearing on reproduction and that by regulating them population can be controlled at will.

That these assumptions are valid only to some extent will be evident from the following considerations. Let us first consider what bearing better economic conditions have on reproduction. Better economic conditions may no doubt offer more diversified interests in life but these do not in any way influence the impact of man and woman to the extent of reducing reproduction even to the slightest degree. For, the relationship of man and woman is largely governed by passion and such passion has no sort of relationship with economic conditions. It is a feature common to all stations in life. So long as the sex relationship is sought for the sake of pleasure, which is what governs most people's actions, it will have no sort of relationship with economic conditions. Improvement of the latter cannot solve the population problem, whatever other beneficial effect it will have on the nation. On the other hand better economic conditions are associated with greater leisure. The mind in such moments seeks after pleasure, except in the case of highly cultured and disciplined persons. What gives greater pleasure to most people than the relationship with the other sex? It is therefore wrong to think that improvement of economic conditions has any bearing on reproduction.

Let us next consider birth control and its effect on population. In the first place it is impracticable of application amidst that particular section of the population which is most prolific. The methods in vogue are too complicated and inconvenient, even for the leisurely and cultured classes. Much less then can they be followed by the working classes, to whom discipline in this matter is unknown and cannot be instilled.

Apart from this practical aspect, the belief that birth is under human control is fundamentally wrong. If this were true, then every married couple, barring a few exceptions, should have not less than a dozen or fifteen children over a period of 25 years of married life. There can be no reason for having a less number for the undoubted efforts they have put forward during the period. But we do not come across such prolific births except in exceptional cases. We cannot account for the reduced number of children, from 1 to 5 or 6 which are most common.

Then control of birth implies that we are responsible for other beings and that we can bring them into existence or not at our will. In that case these off-spring of ours should be entirely governed by us and they cannot have a volition of their own. This is obviously absurd as it is against facts and experience. Man has not created a speck of dust with all the advancement in Science. He has only learned to change the form or shape of existing things. He cannot then claim to be able to create a dynamic soul with an individuality of its own.

Then again no couple sets about bringing forth children, when they come together. Their object is to find enjoyment or the fulfilment of a craving and it is absurd to suppose that the outcome of this should be another individuality. A subtle personality cannot be evolved out of the fruits of the appeasement of passions of others.

If we look at the animal and plant worlds, we may draw a lesson as to how far birth control will be effec-

tive in checking population. More unfavourable circumstances for perpetuating each species among them cannot be imagined. We may rightly say that the most rigorous form of birth control prevails among them. Such an effective method and of universal application cannot even be imagined to be introduded among men. But what is the result? Their populations too have gone on increasing. Could then a feeble attempt at 'birth Control', which is all that is possible among men, be expected to result in any measure of success. It is clearly a delusion.

All these unmistakably show that people have no exact ideas of what birth and death mean and what 'life' itself, fundamentally signifies. These have to be enquired into and properly understood before considering the problem of population and its regulation, if such a thing is at all within the scope of human endeavour. We shall accordingly consider these phenomena in some detail.

All objective Phenomena or more clearly all that may be called objects of visual perception are said to be twice born, according to the sage Vasishta, since they are first conceived, when they have their first birth and then take a concrete shape, when they have a second birth. They are thus said to have two bodies, namely a subtle and a gross body. But we have already clearly established elsewhere that the subtle body is the earlier of the two and that the gross body is formed only later on by being brooded upon. In fact the gross body is only the condensed state of the idea. Thereafter is formed an association of the subtle and the gross which gives rise to what we call *objects*.

This is a feature common to the inanimate world as well as that of the world of life.

But when we come to deal with living entities, the association of the subtle and the gross principles does not seem to be continuous, as in the case of the inanimate world. The association suffers periodical breaks in the shape of death. It is however renewed in one of two ways. According to one school of thought the same subtle entity takes on a fresh gross body and continues the life course. According to another school of thought, the association is carried on only in the race but not in the entity in particular. These widely divergent views have to be carefully examined and a definite conclusion arrived at before we can proceed further, as our subsequent treatment of the subject depends solely on this conclusion. The problem may be more directly stated thus: "Does death mean complete annihilation of the entity concerned or does it indicate the beginning of a fresh life course?"

The True Significance of the Phenomenon of Death.

1. We shall now proceed to consider various observed phenomena in life and see what conclusions they lead us to. In the first place when we consider the human population there are such great disparities between man and man, which extend up to nations even, in all of life's gifts that cannot be explained at all except on the basis of a continued after life. Otherwise we have to suppose that every being is ushered into this world suddenly at some point of time in a different station in life at random and is taken away once for all at some other point of time. Neither birth nor death is at his wish or control. And everyone, for no faul

or credit of his, is variously circumstanced in life, some being born poor and others rich. It stands to reason, in that case, that no one is responsible for anything done by him in the present life. So everyone of us is a helpless tool in the hands of some designing external being who makes sports of us in the manner that we see. This is exactly what the second school of thought leads us to. But in spite of the all powerful controlling Being and our own helplessness, many strive to get better of their lot and do succeed in the attempt, setting at naught the power of that Being. This establishes beyond doubt that self effort has a significant place in the scheme of existence.

If then we have to discard the idea of an External Being in shaping individual affairs and if responsibility for them has necessarily to be attributed to each individual, then the moment of birth or the cause of one's birth as well as that of death should also be his choice or responsibility. These responsibilities cannot be foisted on somebody else, as no one is interested in the individual's affairs. Hence all the three events of a person namely birth, existence, as well as death must be considered together, as they are all part of a particular scheme of existence.

2. If death meant complete annihilation and birth consequently an accident, subject to the whims of a Ruler, then children born of the same parents must be alike both in their physical as well as mental make-up, for we cannot conceive of an endless interference even from such a Being. But such is never the case, not even in the lower orders of creation. The children are all invariably unlike one another and often unlike

either of the parents too. This phenomenon can be explained only by attributing individuality to each entity which overrides the influences arising out of a common parentage. And then in the post-natal period, under the same upbringing, surroundings and training, each child developes into a different being. These differences are very marked in the human species, to such an extent that this may be said to be the rule rather than the exception. In the animal and plant kingdoms, these differences grow less and less. Any-how they persist. This indicates very clearly that every entity bears the stamp of a certain bias which breaks into evidence at some point of its life and fashions or at least influences the subsequent pattern of life. A criminal born and bred in high society may have acquired all the outward signs of polish instilled into him by environment and training but the in-born criminal tendencies are not thereby suppressed but are brought into play when an opportunity arises. Instances of this sort are innumerable and we cannot by any means brush them aside as some unaccountable freaks.

3. We shall next consider the case of child prodigies. The display of extra-ordinary faculties in all such prodigies are either mental or physical. Any such proficiency pre-supposes requisite training either mental or physical. Without actual application and practice no such proficiency can be acquired. Hence when, with the same opportunities and training, we do see marked differences in attainment, then we can only suppose that the extra training must have been acquired in a prior life. There are innumerable cases of this nature which are unmistakable evidences of prior lives. No other explanation is satisfying or rational.

4. Instances have come to light of people endowed with a memory of past life and whose past places of birth and parentage have been verified beyond all doubt. Such instances have been known at all ages and the phenomenon has been correctly explained in the Yogavasishta. Of course extremely few people are endowed with such a faculty and in any case it indicates a natural and conscious death, accompanied by a deep desire to remember the past in the succeeding life.

5. These are some of the more important observed phenomena which unequivocally point to a succession of lives and repudiates entirely the theory of birth at random, a foreordained existence for a time at the dictate of a superior Being accompanied by complete annihilation. Life has no significance, no meaning on this basis. All longing and striving would be in vain if we should be merely the play things of others. What need then for elaborate codes of conduct or moral laws? Life on the other hand is an evolutionary-process from a low state of mental development to the highest state of knowledge and final dissolution. It is a continuous stream and the apparent breaks in the shape of death are only rejuvenating processes enabling the individual to realise his unfulfilled hopes and ambitions under new and more favourable conditions.

6. Many have experienced, on coming to a strange place for the first time, a feeling as if they had been there before, although they could never have been there at any time in the present life. This is an instance of memory of past life flashing into Consciousness.

7. If we look into the population statistics of the world, we find that high or low birth rate is always associated with high or low death rate. If the dead were not reborn then we should expect that where there is low death rate the birth rate should be higher than in countries with high death rate. Deaths should have no influence in reducing births. This then is a conclusive proof that the dead are reborn. Hence if people die every year, more people are born.

If we consider the populations of the countries engaged in wars, both before and after, it will be observed that in spite of millions dying they are all replaced as they die. In fact there is generally a high birth rate during these periods. Those who are to die take care to ensure that they can find fresh bodies when they die.

Twice Born

We stated earlier that life phenomenon is also an association of the subtle and the gross principles, similar to the constitution of inanimate objects. Such living entities are again sometimes considered as twice born. The first birth takes place at the time of conception, from which time onwards the physical body develops into the pattern of the species and the second birth when the young one comes out of the womb or the egg as the case may be. The two distinct stages have a definite purpose. The Cosmic being will not entrust the development of the physical body to the creatures that actually originate them, as they are thoroughly unequal to the task. Hence

Nature has contrived that this stage of development should take place inside the mother's body, exposed to the least amount of risk. In the fully developed stage the young one is ushered into the world which marks its second and true birth. It will however be presently seen that these births of the beings stand in a different relation from what was stated above.

Birth & Death—What they Signify

Here we must consider the phenomena of birth and death again and ascertain what further significances they have. At death the life long association of the body and soul is broken and the body resolves itself into the elements of which it is composed, while the soul re-enters a fresh body. From this fact a few immediate inferences can be drawn namely :—

(1) If the association of body and soul is broken at death, then this association should be deemed to have taken place at birth. But then the question arises, which birth, the first or the second one? The consideration of this question will be taken up presently but in the meanwhile we shall consider what other inferences can be drawn. (2) We stated already that the break in the continuity of body and soul is only apparent and that it is not different from what is seen in the inanimate world. In that case the soul must take on a body immediately, which it can do only at the time of what we called the second birth, as only then a fully developed body is available for its further evolution, in continuation of the previous life and without suffering a break.

This answers the question raised in inference No. 1. (3) Thirdly this establishes that body and soul are separate evolutionary processes, the body being the handiwork of Nature or part of the Cosmic evolutionary process and the soul representing the individual evolutionary process. The soul does not manufacture a body for itself but like a tenant takes its habitation in a residence ready built by the Landlord. When this residence becomes unsuitable the soul enters a new one; only the Landlord is ever the same, namely Cosmic activity.

When we said earlier that the relationship between the two births is not quite the same as in the inanimate world, it was this fact that we had in mind. In the inanimate world the same body persists always but in living beings the bodies go on changing periodically, so that the attribute of "Twin Birth" is somewhat on different lines. The soul is never born in the womb. We shall now proceed to deal with the above inferences, one by one, a little more in detail.

I. The Stage of Conception:

Let us consider how conception is brought about. The union of the two sexes arises out of a thirst for enjoyment. Both the thirst and the final enjoyment are mental phenomena while the actual union is a purely physical act. At the height of enjoyment both parties forget their own selves; the act is carried on mechanically and conception arises thereafter. The fusion of the spermatozoa and the ovary, arising out of this physical act, brings, about a new being. The intention of the parents here is to derive pleasure and not to

get a child. Oftentimes the intentions prior to the union are *not* to be saddled with a child. So an unwanted being has taken its birth. Can this being, by any stretch of imagination, be said to be endowed with a soul which, as we have stated earlier, has an individuality of its own. Such individuality is neither a product nor a derivative of other individualities. Then again the sperm and the ovary do not carry the individualities of the persons who originated them. The component parts of the physical body, endowed though they are with various functions, do not have the individuality of the person, dissolved in them. If it were so, transplanting of parts belonging to animals either on other animals or human bodies would not be possible, as there will then be interaction between the two souls. The various cells of the body and the organs are products of Nature, whose functions have been evolved through millions of years of experience and adaptation. The complete physical body is an organisation of various types of cells with divergent functions evolved by Nature for the use of various orders of entities. Each entity does not produce its own body. It takes its abode in a body produced for it by the handiwork of Nature. On the other hand Nature has no hand in fashioning individualities of persons. They are their own. Nature helps in furnishing the material body for the manifestation of the individualities of human beings. Thus the attraction of the sexes to each other is a contrivance of Nature to preserve the species. This attraction is an all powerful force compelling Man & Beast to fulfil his or its primary duty of perpetuating the species and bring forth fresh organisations of cells patterned on themselves.

Individuality not a Feature of Organisms

Individuality is vital energy combined with *imagination.* The cells of the body are vital energies no doubt but do not have imagination and that is the essence of the difference between the physical body and the soul. Thus the sperm and the ovary cannot bring about a thing having this imaginative faculty, which they themselves do not possess. The cells carry on the only functions which they have been assigned to do and so they can only reproduce other like cells and nothing beyond that. Their individuality ceases with that.

We thus arrive at the conclusion that the Cosmic process evolved successively and in correct sequence the inanimate world, the living cells, plants, and the creatures of air, water and earth by a gradual and long drawn out evolutionary process comprising of experimentation, experience and adaptation. All these various creatures are different organisations of organisms many of which have survived till now and many more have disappeared altogether. But all these organisations function only under the superintendence and control of what we call soul which takes possession of the organisation as soon as Nature hands it out ready made.

2. Phenomenon of Death Considered Again

This leads us immediately to the consideration of the second inference regarding the significance of death in the evolutionary process. Death is only an apparent severance of the association of body and soul, as already established. Sleep is akin to

death except that, on reawakening on the next day, more or less the same body is in association with the soul as in sleep. Advisedly we use the expression "more or less", since the body is never the same from one day to another on account of the fact that it is continually growing from childhood upto the completion of the adolescent period and declining thereafter. So we cannot strictly say that the body is the same at two different points of time. After death, however, an entirely new organisation is obtained. Just as sleep refreshes and reinvigorates the body for the day following, so also does death provide a new body, new environment and renewed hope for the unfulfilled aspirations. Death overtaking every one without exception in varying ways cannot mean anything else. Total extinction of every living thing suddenly at some point of time, which varies endlessly from being to being, is so palpably absurd a conception that it is a wonder how even great minds accept it. Everyone knows that it is not pure chance, since what happens differently to everyone cannot be due to chance. Nor can any one assert that death comes according to some predetermined plan, since such a wilful and capricious planner is unimaginable and absurd. So, if it is neither chance nor the act of an external agent it can only be said to be determined by everyone for himself.

What we call individuality is only a bundle of desires and aversions, based on objects and objective phenomena. These bring about the association of the mechanism of the body, furnished by the Cosmic process, with the soul, for the latter to obtain

fulfilment. Nature or the Cosmic process is not characterised by any sort of bias or will for it has not got a mind. Its only function is activity which takes the form of creative work in an endless chain. This creative work is not its choice but is brought into play by the needs of the creatures and Nature answers the needs by creating the instruments to fulfil the need, which is effected through the agency of the creatures themselves. This is the genesis of the various organs of creatures as well as the various species of creatures. Thus the continued creative work of Nature is initiated and sustained by the needs of individual creatures. This in turn brings about the recurrent association of body and soul. So we see that desires, which are purely mental phenomena and which serve to create individuality, bring about the soul's association with the body.

Another aspect of the phenomenon of death is that every entity is at a particular stage of development at this point of time and in a fresh cycle of life it can only start from where it left. It cannot start all anew by building up a body from scratch as happens in the womb. This would mean that there is a break to the life stream and that it has to go through the whole process of evolution, which is far fetched and quite unnecessary.

Lastly we must consider the phenomenon of death from a new angle. Inanimate objects mark the first phase of evolutionary activity. These inanimate things are characterised by unchanging properties. They represent one aspect of Cosmic activity, that is, eternal unredeeming slavery, having no scope for

variation in further activity. If there should be scope for continued activity at this stage of evolution, what better can be imagined than that which provides endless change and what other phenomenon is there to fulfil this need except the phenomenon of "death-rebirth?" This is a big spurt of imaginative activity in the evolutionary process, which not only ensured continued activity and change for the future but also marked the first step in emancipation from the eternal slavery, which was to culminate in man. It would be clear now that evolutionary process was greately diversified only because of this phenomenon which was conceived early in the evolutionary drama.

Death is the only means which enabled successive species being developed to meet the changing external conditions and circumstances. No other phenomenon can be thought of for the purpose. Apart from its being the very foundation of the later evolutionary process, death brings comfort to many and new hope.

3. The Two Parallel Evolutionary Processes

We next go on to the third inference namely that there are two parallel evolutionary processes at work, one Cosmic and the other individualistic. The Cosmic process is an unending one ever answering the needs of every kind of species that inhabits this globe. It has no purpose of its own to fulfil and it just furnishes what is required of it. What is required of it is the physical body for the various creatures to manifest their activities and satisfy their needs. This is accomplished with the instrumentality of the creatures themselves. Hunger and the attraction of the

opposite sex known as Manmatha's arrows, the universal and fundamental cravings of all creatures, which bring about the activity to solve present existence and the future of the species, are the means by which Cosmic activity is sustained.

If the role of furnishing the physical body were not taken care of by the Cosmic activity and if each entity be supposed to manufacture its own body, then there should be present an endless variety in the physical frameworks of each species. Men would not merely have two hands, two legs and so forth but would have them in varying numbers. It would be impossible to have such unexceptional uniformity as we see. Such unvarying precision in the general make up and in all the various internal organs can only be achieved by Nature. This one fact should establish beyond all doubt that it is Nature that provides and brings about the physical body and that individuals have no hand in fashioning it, except as tools of Nature to carry out its behests.

Then the parallel evolutionary process is individual in character. Every entity entitled to be called a living being is "activity combined with imagination", which latter varies from the lowest organism to the most highly evolved and complex human being. In truth one creature differs from another only in the range of imaginative activity. The translation of this subtle process into concrete acts needs a physical body which is furnished by Nature. The bodies manufactured by Nature and the entities on the look out for a body come together, which is the life process. The severance of this association and reunion is simultaneous as we

have already indicated. The vital energy which discards a body cannot by its very nature remain suspended in space as it were. All forms of energy have this feature that they must spend themselves on some material substance, creating some sort of a change in the latter while seeking its own extinction. But all these brute forms of energy are devoid of the creative activity *i.e.* imagination and hence there is no renewal after extinction. But the vital energy is possessed of imagination to an abundant degree which takes the form of a variety of desires which keeps the flame of life burning. Hence as each burst of activity kindled by desires is quenched, new ones take it place forming a continuous series.

The life process may be likened to the charging of a condenser. The mind is the generator with desires acting as motive force charging the body which is the condenser. The condenser discharges itself into external objects of the world. After each discharge the condenser is charged anew and so it goes on until the condenser is rendered unfit and a new one takes its place. Then a new series of charges and discharges and so it goes on, the condenser being replaced as often as it becomes unfit. The condensers sometimes suffer gradual decay and at other times collapse suddenly but they are every time replaced by a fresh one which is kept ready made. After this goes on for a long time the motive force of the generator itself becomes feebler and feebler until it can no more charge a condenser. In such a case the generator and the condenser both disappear. This is the final dissolution of the entity.

Restating in brief what we have discussed so far, there are two evolutionary processes which are interde-

pendent, one being the Cosmic process which, so to say, serves as a mirror of successive ideas and provides at the same time the material body for the manifestation and development of individualised ideas of different patterns. Each successive idea-group developes into a particular species of creatures and makes use of the material body which Nature furnishes. The association of the body and soul is periodically renewed in accordance with the requirements of the soul itself. Such break and reunion take place at the time denoted by us as death and birth. These two are simultaneous phenomena.

Before we leave this subject, it may as well be pointed out that there is one other essential difference between human beings and all the rest of the created objects. Starting from the inanimate world and tracing the successive steps of the evolutionary process, we find that all these various stages mark the gradual unfoldment of the parallel evolutionary process which manifests itself completely only in man. What we call "Mind," which is nothing but the fivefold sensations and reactions combined with imagination, is characteristic of man only. It is this faculty that enables him to percieve the duality of subject and object and leads him on finally to the realisation of the unity underlying subject and object. Whereas all other creatures are completely in the grip of the Cosmic activity and are wholly its products, man on the other hand is only partly so and enjoys a large measure of independence. And so the duration of the life process at each stage is dependent on his own deeds and is not determined by the Cosmic activity. But in case of all other beings, their life is determined by Nature alone.

Population

Having now clearly established what death and birth signify truly, we may proceed to consider the problem of population. Here we may confine ourselves principally to the consideration of human population, for much more accurate statistics are available for it than for any other classs of living beings. Further, and what is of great significance, the growth of human population takes place in a manner that differs very much from the rest of the species, namely animal or plant kingdoms. That is to say, while animal and plant life, having no discriminative knowledge nor conscious attachment or aversion, are solely Nature's products and are brought into being or annihilated entirely by Nature, the human population on the other hand adds its own individual efforts to that of Nature and so modifies it to some degree. To what extent this is possible will be discussed later. For instance the span of life of the human race can be altered by deliberate and prolonged effort over several generations but this is not possible with the other species. Their span of life is what Nature endows them with. Of course when these are taken care of by human beings and shaped by the latter, then the same results are obtained but in such cases it is man's efforts and not those of the animals that are experimented with. When the influence of this factor is ignored for the present, then what applies to human population applies equally well to the other species. We shall therefore consider human population first.

The present population of the word is stated to be 2300,000,000 and it is also said, on the basis of statistics,

that the average rate of increase of population is roughly one per cent per year. This may be true for the past few centuries but not for all times. Common-sense would tell us that when man first appeared on this earth there should have been only a very small number of them scattered over the different parts of the earth. Now any additions to the population must surely represent a much larger percentage than now. With steady increase in population, with the advance of time, the percentage increase should be steadily decreasing, although the actual number added may be steadily increasing from year to year. If we ignore such events as wars and pestilences, which represent abnormal phenomena and which occur only at long intervals of time in comparatively small areas, the course of Nature can be considered to be smooth and uneventful. Things do not happen in an erratic manner and so we may safely conclude that the percentage increase in population had been a steadily decreasing one, rockoning from the beginnings of human race. This must be correct even on other general considerations. Anything progressing increasingly must become infinite, and anything decreasing progressively must vanish out of existence. Neither of it has happened to the human population or to the other surviving species. What we witness in the human race is a steady increase from small beginnings to the present magnitude of 2,300,000,000.

Let us for a moment consider what would be the result if the population has no tendency to increase. It must then either remain stationary or be gradually decreasing. In the latter event, human race would become extinct in a few hundred years. If it is to

remain stationary how is this to be achieved? Supposing for a moment that the increase or decrease rested solely in our powers, would it be even then possible to so arrange matters that the population remained steady. Even with a strong central world Government under the most efficient Dictator, this is not possible of achievement. It is simply unthinkable. As in all observed phenomena, if the tendency to increase is somehow thought to be arrested and the opposite of it achieved then the inherent momentum of this opposite tendency would push it past the steady state and result in a steady decrease which would only wipe out the race. But as we had already stated, the production of the human bodily organisation is not in our hands; it is a Cosmic process. If then we subscribe to the belief that the human race is bound to survive, as so many other species have survived, and not become extinct, then we must also concede that the population must be ever on the increase, however small it be.

It has been authoritatively stated that during the last 300 years the population has grown, on an average of 1% per annum, from about 500 millons to 2300 millions, the percentage being reckoned on the original population. But if we reckon from year to year then the percentage will be only 0.5. It is however found that working with these percentages, it is not at all possible to arrive at any rational results as to the period at which man began to appear on this earth. For instance let us assume that the rate of increase of population had been maintained throughout and on this basis let us find out what the population was 2000 years ago.

This is given by the relation

$$X \times (1 \cdot 01)^{2000} = 2300,000,000$$
$$\text{or } X = \text{nearly } 6$$

That is to say, the human population 2000 years ago should have been only six, which is of course absurd. But in cases of this sort one would expect a much higher percentage increase in the beginning, gradually decreasing to the present rate. On this more correct basis however, we would get still more absurd results namely, that as recently as a thousand years ago, the population was only a few in number. But we know definitely that man's appearance on this planet must be at least 5,00,000 years old and that since then the population has steadily been increasing to its present magnitude. We see then that neither any fixed percentage increase or varying percentages with the march of time gives any clue as to how the population had varied with the march of time. It is however certain that there must be some underlying basis for this increase in population.

Let us look at the matter in another way. The present rate of increase of population being 1% or 23,000,000 per year, we can express it as 1.8 persons being born every minute. If this had been the rate of birth all the time, the present population would have been reached in about 2500 years, which is again contrary to facts. This would then indicate that the rate of birth was less and less as we go further and further back from now. Probably the beginnings of the human era recorded not more than one birth in every 20 minutes. Common sense would also confirm that some such thing must be the truth. With comparatively few numbers the addition to the existing

population must have been very much less, although expressed in percentage it would be large.

And now let us look at some activities of nature around us. The movements of the sun, moon and the planets follow some established patterns and definite sequences of time. Plants and trees sprout and flower during definite seasons of the year and at certain definite intervals of time. Animals mate at more or less regular intervals. The embryos in the womb require a definite period of time for full maturity before being ushered into the world. Even in the human family there are definite psychological and physical changes taking place in the course of the life period at certain specific intervals. Women are marked by their regular monthly periods. Thus every type of activity of Nature is a kind of periodic event occurring at certain definite intervals of time. Nothing happens at random or without some plan. We may say that there is a certain rhythm in all the phenomena that has been established by Nature. Events of the world must catch up with these rhythmic pulses.

It was pointed out earlier that the physical bodies are a product of Nature and that these bodies are produced in answer to the needs of souls which have to discard their existing bodies to get new ones. But Cosmic activity, as was stated in the preceding paragraph, must manifest itself on established lines of activity and must go on producing bodies at some definite and regular intervals so that those which need them may have their desires fulfilled immediately. It would be unnatural to suppose that Cosmic activity can take place at random or at irregular intervals as it

is against all experience. Thus both the demands and the fulfilment thereof must necessarily be periodic phenomena. So, along with the rest of the physiological and psychological changes which mark the life span, birth and death should also be classed as periodic functions of Nature's activity. The periodic times are of course not fixed and unvarying through all ages. We should expect a quickening in the tempo with advancing time. Further each species of beings has a different periodic time, as we actually see. But whereas every one of these diverse species is wholly subordinate to Nature's movements, the human species is distinguished by a certain amount of freedom, by the strenuous and purposeful exercise of which this periodic time of Nature is modified to some extent. We will refer to this again a little later.

The steady increase in the population of any particular species must arise out of two contributing factors, *viz:* (1) by the exercise of Nature's activity which is incessantly pursued in fulfilment of the needs arising from all the species and (2) by the dead ones taking a fresh lease of life in a new body. So long as a particular species is growing in numbers and is not decadent, both forces must be operating, as only then we can account for the steady growth in its numbers. If only the second phenomenon is in operation, the number must remain stationary and it would soon lead to the gradual extinction of that species, for without the activity of Nature in providing new souls, the bodies produced at any time could find no souls to occupy them. The phenomena of rebirth imposes the necessity for a steady stream of new souls. Further it is obvious that Nature's single handed activity also

cannot account for the growing numbers. For without released souls that need bodies for their habitation, Nature's activity would soon come to a halt. It is for this reason that the Hindu Scriptures again and again stress on the point that the most sacred duty of man is to perpetuate the species and that if a man died without a child, his forefathers would be displeased and prevented from going to their destination, *viz:* Heaven. This is only a more forcible way of inculcating the idea that the dead ones are thereby prevented from being reborn. If Nature were to be thought to produce the bodies as well as souls continuously, then it would amount to the various species being reduced to nothing. All individual effort will have no significance and will achieve nothing. But this is contrary to the facts of experience. Thus both phenomena must be held to be operative to account for the growth in numbers of any species.

This is the proper place to consider the reasons for the population to increase mainly among the poor and down-trodden than among the socially more advanced sections. We know that, where there is marked increase in births, there is a correspondingly large increase also in deaths or to put it more correctly a large death rate calls for a correspondingly large birth rate. Now these deaths have to be made good. How is this done?

We stated before that the addition to the population is effected in two ways *i.e.* (1) by the dead being reborn and (2) by the additions due to Cosmic activity which periodically injects new souls into the life stream. Now the addition effected by the Cosmic activity must

naturally be done at the lowest level with no prior experience. The addition cannot take place at higher levels, as these beings indicate prior efforts and experience. Every soul has to begin at the beginning and gradually climb up the social ladder in successive births. Hence all the increase in the population at any time must naturally take place at the lowest level which explains the high birth rate among them.

Is it then reasonable to hope that we can stem this activity of Nature and stop this influx of new participants in the human activity. It is an observed fact that during any time interval there are more births than deaths, that is, more bodies are produced than are needed to accommodate the dead. The additional souls needed to people these bodies can be supplied only by Cosmic activity.

The periodic time of birth and death, which, as stated already, coalesce into a single phenomenon coincides or synchronises with the tempo of life of the species or race. We may also express the fact in another way, *viz*: that since Nature, in its unceasing activity, must go on producing bodies, there must be deaths in order to release souls to inhabit them. It emphasises the fact that it is Nature that really sets the tempo for the rate of death or birth among the populations of the world.

This rate is a periodic function, *i.e.* additions to the population take place at a definite rate and at regular intervals of time. But both these rates are subject to gradual changes with the march of time. In the beginnings of the race, the rate of increase must

have been slow and the additions must have taken place at much longer intervals. The rate of increase gradually increases, with the tempo also getting quicker.

It is easily possible to determine both the frequency of birth or death as well as the rate of addition, if an attempt is made to take world statistics. It is not sufficient to have such figures only for some countries or groups of countries, as these figures alone do not give reliable information. The reason for this is that there is always an invisible exchange of population among the countries of the world. so that the reduced rate of increase of population in some country or countries is made up for by an accelerated increase in other parts of the world. The strong affinities which some people develop to other peoples of the globe must naturally result in migration to those countries, if not during this lifetime, at least after death. Physical barriers do not prevent the souls from taking their birth in the countries of their choice. This sort of invisible migration has been going on all through the ages and in a more intense degree in recent times resulting in ever greater understanding and sympathy between one another. This process is slowly at work drawing the peoples of the world together to weld them into a single people in the course of a few countries, perhaps.

We have next to examine the question whether the rate of increase of population can be influenced in any manner, and to what extent, by human efforts. That it is theoretically possible can be admitted without the least hesitation. As we stated before Nature has no

purpose of its own and all that it does is to answer to the earnest and sustained efforts of a general nature. And so, if there is such a general, earnest and sustained desire as well as the necessary effort to reduce or increase the population, Nature responds by bringing about such a change in due course. But if we consider the practical aspects of such a problem, then one would inevitably come to the conclusion that it is impossible to infuse the idea into the mass of the people and make of it a crying desire. It would meet with silent resistance from the bulk of the masses. And secondly, even if it is supposed for a moment that the idea has been seized upon by the people in the desired manner, the results cannot be obtained immediately. For an idea to take root and to be translated into action and then for these efforts to blossom into fruits takes a long time. There is a considerable time lag which may even be as many as a few generations. This would mean that the efforts of one generation are reaped by a future generation, perhaps by the grandchildren, who are really those who put forward the effort in the past. The generation that put forth a mighty effort goes unrewarded. The problem does not get solved immediately. The future generation will probably be saddled with an unwanted problem of being faced with a dwindling population when they probably need more men for their needs. Thus, as in all human affairs, sustained and sincere efforts do not go unrewarded, but the results mostly come unexpectedly, creating oftentimes fresh problems involving renewed efforts.

The next question is whether there is not some quicker means of arresting the increase in population

at the present rate. There is a solution and to understand it we must realise that the unremitting activity of Nature, which manifests itself periodically and which serves as a carrier for the creative activity of the various species, is of a pure and untainted sort. The various species catch up with it to manifest their own activities. If there is increased activity of one species then the activity of Nature manifests itself in a less intense degree in the other species. Nature makes no distinction between one species and another. It expends itself as demands are made on it in order to be restored to its natural state of equilibrium, leaving the less active species to take advantage of only what is left of its own activity. This would result in less reproduction in the latter species. That means to say if human effort is directed towards fostering and increasing the plant life and animal kingdom, then the breeding activity in human species will automatically suffer a decline.

It is to be remembered that the reproductive urge is a Cosmic activity, although it may be taken advantage of for the purposes of deriving pleasure and this activity bears fruit, in the shape of conception, only in limited cases and not at all times the activity is pursued. This indicates that reproduction is initiated by Nature. And so if reproduction of the plant and animal Kingdoms increases, it must as a corollary decline in the human species. This is the only sane and natural method of meeting the menace of the population problem. Incidentally it is beneficial in a variety of ways to all the creatures of this planet as they would all then participate in its bounties equitably.

Then there is the other means of reducing the birth rate namely by reducing the death rate. This can be achieved only by improving the general health of the population, by making them immune from the various kinds of pestilences, by reducing infant mortality and by abandoning wars. In short all measures which tend to reduce the death rate and promote longevity will automatically reduce the birth rate in some measure. This can be established on mere common sense grounds.

Having said so much we cannot leave a few other things unsaid. In the first place man came into this world at the end of a long period of evolution. He had no part or lot in the history of the evolutionary process prior to his appearance. All that went on without his solicitous concern. He now seems to think that he is carrying the burden of the evolutionary process on his shoulders and that if he did not do something immediately to solve this problem of the ever increasing human population he faces stark starvation and annihilation. But this thought has been persisting down the ages from the dawn of human civilization. At all times and in all climes people had thought they were overcrowded and so some of them migrated to other lands.

This contributed to the ever widening unfoldment of the land, till today, when a great part of all available land on the surface of this globe is occupied and cultivated. If a large section of the people live in semi-starvation now, it is because of mal-distribution and the reduction in production arising out of the frequent wars. If the worlds goods were equitably

distributed, nobody need starve today or for any number of centuries. It is foolish to talk of over-population at any time. The world marches on in spite of all our talks and fears and it is not going to meet a calamitous end. In the meanwhile man must work unceasingly for the common good and for equitable distribution of the world's goods. Above all man must know to be content with what is necessary and take out of the land only what is needed.

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